

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 /050 W
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R 131235Z JAN 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4663
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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GW
SUBJECT: UNEMPLOYMENT TOPS ONE MILLION IN DECEMBER
BUT IMPROVEMENT IN SEASONALLY ADJUSTED TERMS

REF: BONN 0252

SUMMARY: AS EXPECTED, NON-SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER ROSE OVER 100,000 TO 1,089,900 FOR A RATE OF 4.8 PERCENT, UP FROM 4.3 PERCENT IN NOVEMBER. WORKERS ON PART TIME ALSO INCREASED WHILE THERE WERE FEWER REGISTERED JOB OPENINGS THAN LAST MONTH. SEASONALLY ADJUSTED FIGURES, HOWEVER, INDICATED THE CONTINUATION OF THE TREND TOWARD IMPROVEMENT
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IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT PICTURE. TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR 1976 SHOW AN AVERAGE OF 1,060,300 UNEMPLOYED, A DECLINE OF 13,900 FROM 1975, FOR AN AVERAGE RATE OF 4.6 PERCENT. END SUMMARY.

1. UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES (NON-SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)
RELEASED BY THE FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE SHOW THAT

UNEMPLOYMENT ROSE IN DECEMBER BY 105,200 OR 10.7 PERCENT TO A LEVEL OF 1,089,900. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME UNEMPLOYMENT HAS TOPPED ONE MILLION SINCE MARCH 1976, BUT REPRESENTS A DROP OF 133,500 FROM DECEMBER ONE YEAR AGO. THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN DECEMBER WAS 4.8 PERCENT, COMPARED WITH 4.3 PERCENT IN NOVEMBER AND 5.3 PERCENT IN DECEMBER 1975.

2. MORE IMPORTANT IN ECONOMIC TERMS ARE THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED FIGURES. THESE NUMBERS SHOW THAT UNEMPLOYMENT DECLINED DURING DECEMBER, DOWN 7,000 FROM NOVEMBER LEVELS TO 1,010,000. ALSO SEASONALLY ADJUSTED, THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED JOB OPENINGS INCREASED BY 1,000 TO 249,000.

3. DECEMBER'S INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT CAN BE DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO SEASONAL INFLUENCES, ESPECIALLY IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND METAL INDUSTRIES. OVER 65,000 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS (AN INCREASE OF 26,000 OVER NOVEMBER) AND 144,700 METAL AND ELECTRICAL WORKERS (UP 12,200 FROM NOVEMBER) WERE UNEMPLOYED. NEVERTHELESS, CONDITIONS IN THESE SEASONALLY SENSITIVE SECTORS WERE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED OVER LEVELS IN DECEMBER 1975 (DOWN 23 PERCENT FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND OVER 33 PERCENT FOR METAL AND ELECTRICAL WORKERS). IMPROVEMENT IN THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES CONFIRMS THAT THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY CONTINUES TO HAVE ITS IMPACT IN GRADUALLY IMPROVING LABOR MARKET.

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4. THE NUMBER OF WORKERS ON PART TIME (IN NON-SEASONALLY ADJUSTED TERMS) INCREASED BY 46,100 OR 27.5 PERCENT TO 213,800 FROM MID-NOVEMBER TO MID-DECEMBER, BUT COMPARES FAVORABLY WITH THE 748,500 PART TIME WORKERS REPORTED IN DECEMBER 1975. THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED JOB OPENINGS DECLINED BY 16,200 IN DECEMBER 1976 TO 185,900 BUT REMAINS HIGHER THAN ONE YEAR AGO (168,400).

5. UNEMPLOYMENT (ALSO NON-SEASONALLY ADJUSTED) FOR FOREIGN WORKERS ROSE 4,800 FROM NOVEMBER TO 94,900 IN DECEMBER. THIS IS 50,200 OR 34.6 PERCENT LOWER THAN AT THE SAME TIME LAST YEAR.

6. UNEMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH (UNDER 20 YEARS OF AGE) ROSE BY 2,700 OR 2.7 PERCENT IN DECEMBER TO 103,000. SEASONAL LAYOFFS IN CONSTRUCTION AND AGRICULTURE ARE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR REVERSING A FOUR MONTH TREND IN WHICH THE NUMBER OF FEMALE UNEMPLOYED EXCEEDED THAT

OF MALES; IN DECEMBER, 573,400 MALES (UP 92,200 FROM NOVEMBER) AS OPPOSED TO 516,600 FEMALES (UP 13,100) WERE UNEMPLOYED.

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7. UNEMPLOYMENT INCREASED IN ALL GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF THE FRG BUT VARIED BETWEEN A LOW OF 3.2 PERCENT IN BADEN-WUERTEMBERG AND A HIGH OF 6.0 PERCENT IN NORTH BAVARIA. UNEMPLOYMENT ROSE MOST SHARPLY IN BAVARIA (UP 24.5 PERCENT IN THE NORTH AND 20.8 PERCENT IN THE SOUTH OVER NOVEMBER LEVELS) WHERE SEASONAL INFLUENCES WERE MOST PRONOUNCED.

8. ANNUAL AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT (NON-SEASONLY ADJUSTED) FOR 1976 WAS 1,060,300 OR 4.6 PERCENT. (IN 1975, THE LEVEL WAS 1,074,200 OR 4.7 PERCENT.) UNEM-

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PLOYMENT FOR FOREIGN WORKERS AVERAGED 4.6 PERCENT AND THE NUMBER OF OPEN POSITIONS DROPPED 1,000 SINCE 1975 TO 235,000. THE MOST MARKED IMPROVEMENT WAS IN THE NUMBER OF WORKERS ON PART TIME: IN 1976, ONLY 277,000 PERSONS FELL INTO THIS CATEGORY COMPARED TO 773,300 IN 1975.

9. RELEASE OF DECEMBER'S UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES ELICITED THE USUAL SET OF RESPONSES: SPOKESMEN FOR THE GOVERNMENT COALITION STRESSED THE SEASONAL CHARACTER OF THE INCREASE WHILE THE OPPOSITION POINTED TO THE NEW FIGURES AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INABILITY TO COPE WITH THE PROBLEM. UNION COMMENT WAS RELATIVELY RESTRAINED AND CALLED FOR MORE ATTENTION TO BE PAID TO UNEMPLOYMENT AS THE FRG'S NUMBER ONE PROBLEM.
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